

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 04227 301444Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 IO-13 TRSE-00 /091 W
-----019461 310915Z /13

R 301356Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6386
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION USNATO
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 4227

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, UR, NO
SUBJECT: UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE WARNS AGAINST CONDOMINIUM
ARRANGEMENTS WITH USSR

REF: OSLO 4190

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE JOHAN HOLST, IN AN AUGUST 29 ADDRESS TO THE NORDIC PEOPLES AND DEFENSE ASSOCIATION IN GREENLAND, STATED THAT NORWAY MUST AVOID BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD GIVE THE USSR SPECIAL RIGHTS IN NORWEGIAN TERRITORY, ARRANGEMENTS WHICH THE GON CANNOT AT THE SAME TIME EXTEND TO ITS PRINCIPAL ALLIES. HOLST SAID THAT NORWEGIAN POLICY MUST NOT GIVE RISE TO SOVIET EXPECTATIONS OF A SOVIET/NORWEGIAN CONDOMINIUM IN THE BARENTS SEA.

2. IN THE SPEECH, HOLST POINTED OUT THE ADVANCES IN
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PAGE 02 OSLO 04227 301444Z

WEAPONRY AND SURVEILLANCE TECHNIQUES THAT HAVE HEIGHTENED THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTHERN AREAS. THESE ADVANCES, HE SAID, MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR NORWAY TO BASE ITS SECURITY POLICY ON LOCAL CONDITIONS. HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO VIEW NORWEGIAN SECURITY POLICIES IN A GLOBAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT, WITH THE US AND THE USSR AS THE PRINCIPAL PROTAGONISTS.

3. HOLST SAID THAT, UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS, NORWAY CANNOT ISOLATE HERSELF FROM THE CONFLICT OF INTERESTS BETWEEN THE MAJOR POWERS. HE POINTED OUT THE NEED FOR NORWEGIAN SECURITY POLICY TO HAVE THE LOWEST POSSIBLE DEGREE OF TENSION-CREATING EFFECTS. STABILITY BETWEEN THE MAJOR POWERS, HOLST SAID, COULD BE WEAKENED IF NORWEGIAN MEASURES WERE TO THREATEN MAJOR SOVIET SECURITY INTERESTS. HE BALANCED THIS CONCEPT BY HIS STATEMENT THAT, AT THE SAME TIME, NORWAY MUST HAVE THE CAPACITY FOR CREDIBLE, CONSISTENT AND UNBIASED ENFORCEMENT OF THE AREAS TO WHICH NORWAY HAS A CLAIM. END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. BEGIN CLASSIFIED. COMMENT: HOLST'S ADDRESS, FOLLOWING NORDLI'S SPEECH OF AUGUST 17, HAS SERVED TO DEFINE FURTHER THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF NORWEGIAN COOPERATION WITH THE USSR IN THE NORTHERN REGION. WITH HIS REJECTION OF THE CONDOMINIUM APPROACH, HOLST HAS PUT ON PUBLIC RECORD A POINT OF VIEW, WHICH, WHILE SHARED BY ALMOST ALL GON SECURITY POLICY MAKERS, HAS RARELY BEEN ARTICULATED IN PUBLIC BY GON OFFICIALS. AS IN THE CASE OF THE NORDLI SPEECH, THE HOLST ADDRESS SERVES BOTH TO ADVISE THE USSR OF THE LIMITS OF NORWEGIAN FLEXIBILITY AND TO PROVIDE A GON ANSWER TO THE CRITICS, FROM THE CENTER AND RIGHT, WHO HAVE QUESTIONED THE GON'S FIRMLINESS IN ITS DEALINGS WITH THE USSR. END CLASSIFIED.
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PAGE 03 OSLO 04227 301444Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, SURVEILLANCE, SECURITY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978OSLO04227
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780355-1009
Format: TEL
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978088/aaaaagtd.tel
Line Count: 95
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 65c9ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 OSLO 4190
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1785083
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE WARNS AGAINST CONDOMINIUM ARRANGEMENTS WITH USSR
TAGS: PBOR, UR, NO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/65c9ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014